



St. Louis Audubon Society



Tale Feathers

VOLUME 64, NUMBER 6

DECEMBER 1997

Brad Jacobs to Address Joint WGNSS/Audubon Meeting in February

by Jim Holsen

Brad Jacobs, an ornithologist and wildlife biologist with the Missouri Department of Conservation in Jefferson City, will discuss "The Breeding Bird Atlas: What It Means for Birders in Missouri", at the February joint meeting with the Webster Groves Nature Study Society. The meeting will be held in the large auditorium at the St. Louis County Library on Lindbergh Boulevard, just south of Clayton Road, at 8 pm on Friday evening, February 13, 1998. The auditorium and meeting rooms are along the north side of the building.

Brad Jacobs and James D. Wilson coauthored the recently published *Missouri Breeding Bird Atlas: 1986-1992*. For each species known to breed in Missouri, the Atlas provides a distribution map that depicts its breeding range within the state. The data, collected by over 400 volunteer birders, provides a baseline against which ornithologists can measure increases or decreases in the breeding bird population. It also helped to determine the locations of rare species and identified significant habitats.

The Missouri Ozarks, with wide expanses of deep forest cover, are thought to provide breeding habitat for many forest-loving birds which are not breeding successfully in the fragmented forests of neighboring states. Forest edges attract cowbirds and other predators which do not usually frequent deep forest interiors. Missouri is thought to be a "source" for these breeding species, which then spread out to populate the more open forests in adjacent states. The status of Missouri breeding birds is, therefore, important to

the more general concern about the declining populations of many of the neotropical migrants that breed in North America, but winter in Central or South America.

Over 10 years devoted to the Atlas have provided Brad with a special insight into the problems of Missouri birds. Brad is also the Missouri contact for the IBA program, which seeks to identify "Important Bird Areas" that may need special attention or preservation.

Join your friends in an evening that promises to give us all a better understanding of birding in Missouri.

Season's Greetings

Fall Birding Trips Were Great Success— What's Next?

by Jim Malone

The combined St. Louis Audubon and Webster Groves Nature Study Society (WGNSS) bird outings have been well attended this fall—by birders and birds. Since the last edition of *Tale Feathers*, we have had 5 great trips!

On October 5, we met Dan Kassebaum and Al Seppi at Hazlet State Park on the west side of Carlyle Lake. We briefly birded some of the woods in the park and then moved over to the east side of the lake where most of us got decent views of a group of Sabine's gulls from Crappie Cove. In addition to this unusual gull, we also got to watch an osprey fishing off the cove. Back on the west side of the lake, we moved to parking lot #3 north of Tamalco. This

location is nearly always good for shorebirds, gulls, and waterfowl during migration, and today was no exception. Shortly after we began walking in the area, we saw greater and lesser yellow-legs, herons, egrets, pectoral sandpipers, and a number of peeps. A pair of American avocets, sanderlings, semi-palmated plovers, American golden plover, stilt sandpipers, and American pipits rounded out a wonderful day at Carlyle.

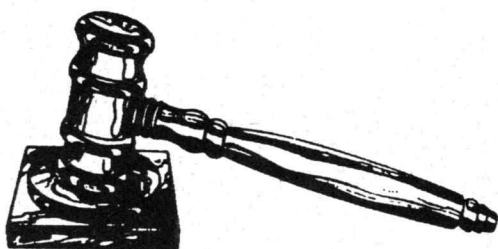
Our next trip was to Chautauqua National Wildlife Refuge on the Illinois River. See details of this great trip on page 7.

On November 2, we met at Busch Conservation Area in St. Charles County. Although recent construction and clearing activities at Busch have affected several premier birding locations, the group had a good day, identifying 55 species including red-breasted nuthatches, cedar waxwings, several sparrow and duck species, and multiple raptors (including bald eagles and ospreys). The highlight of the day occurred at the shorebird area, where a small group of birders flushed an American bittern, which flew a short distance into the shorebird enclosure where we were unable to relocate it.

Continued on page 5

In This Issue

February Joint Meeting	page 1
New Strategic Plan	page 2
Birdbath Heaters	page 4
Books for Auduboners	page 5
Field Office Proposal	page 6
Web Sites of Interest	page 6



New Strategic Plan Approved by Board of Directors

An informal committee, under the leadership of Dave Tylka, submitted a new strategic plan to the St. Louis Audubon board of directors, which was considered and unanimously approved at the December 2 meeting. This plan, written after nearly 2 years of meetings, clarifies the responsibilities of officers, board members, and committee chairmen. It looks forward to a time within the next 5 years when St. Louis Audubon may have part-time staff assistance for office administration and/or coordination of our work in education and conservation.

On March 7, 1989, the Audubon board unanimously approved our first 5-year strategic plan prepared, then as now, under the guidance of Dave Tylka. That plan helped the Society to determine what it wanted to be and provided some guidelines on how to get there. It has been a model for other environmental groups. Now, nearly 9 years later, it is time for us to rethink our goals and to decide what we can accomplish in today's environment and what has to be done if we are to succeed.

The plan expresses our commitment "to help our community to achieve a sustainable balance in the use of our natural resources." The 3 goals are more specific. The first, to set our priorities on birds, other wildlife, and wildlife habitat, reflects the interests of our members, as revealed in answers to 2 questionnaires, and is consistent with the newly defined mission of the National Audubon Society. The second goal expresses our interest in conservation, and the third relates to our interest in education. The objectives are very specific statements, usually with dates and other easily measured criteria.

Our revised by-laws, adopted by the Society at our annual meeting this past

April, spell out the responsibilities of officers and enumerate the committees which will, in fact, be responsible for most of the Society's efforts in education and conservation. Jerry Miller, a past president of St. Louis Audubon, was instrumental in gaining approval for the new by-laws. In a series of job descriptions, the new strategic plan describes in detail the responsibilities of the officers, board members, and committee chairmen provided for in the new by-laws.

It will be challenging for us to get all of this into place, but after the first year, we will find that the St. Louis Audubon Society has become a more effective agent for conservation and education.

The Audubon board thanks the following for their role in developing this new strategic plan:

Howard Adams	Jim Malone
Bill Brandhorst	Jerry Miller
Jerry Castillon	Mary Lou Miller
Katherine Chambers	Bill Salsgiver
Dallas Cox	Rex Schmidt
Don Davis	John Solodar
Mary Dueren	Dave Tylka
Bill Groth, Jr.	Betsy Warren
Jim Holsen	

Audubon Volunteers for Channel 9 Membership Drive

On Tuesday evening, December 9, various St. Louis Audubon members volunteered to man phones for KETC-TV (Channel 9) during one of its membership drives. What a great way for Audubon to get some local public exposure with the help of...

Lynne Breakstone
Jerry Castillon
Dallas Cox
Tom Day
Susanne Greenlee
Bill Groth
Sarah Lenoe
Jerry Miller
Mary Lou Miller
Edward Ortleb
Dale Ponce
John Solodar

Thanks to those who helped in this endeavor!

Get to Know

... Dianne Johnson

(This is the twentieth in a series of articles written about and by St. Louis Audubon board members themselves to that all our membership can be better acquainted with our decision makers on the board.)

I teach biology and geoscience at Eureka High School in the Rockwood School District. My greatest desire for my students is for them to become aware of the environment in which they live, work, and play and of their impact on that environment. Several of them agreed to write about their experiences.

"Dianne Johnson. In my mind, her name will forever be synonymous with adventure, a good heart, and, of course, birds. Up until last year, I had looked at birds as nothing more than pests capable only of wrecking a recently washed car. With this attitude, I decided to go on a summer trip to Belize which Mrs.

Johnson was chaperoning. Today, I have a passion for birds, and I owe it all to the persistence and good nature of Dianne Johnson." — Doug Burgess, EHS senior

"Mrs. Johnson took a small group of students to Jefferson City for Environmental Lobby Day. We all came away with a new or renewed interest in environmental issues and the desire to get involved. Mrs. Johnson is always willing to try new activities and participate in many events with her students. It is great to have such an enthusiastic teacher." — Jenna Bollinger, EHS junior

"Mrs. Johnson is always teaching me something I didn't know. She knows so much about birds and rocks, and is lots of fun to be with. She's always willing to get involved and cares about what's going on in the world today. I am much more interested in birds and try to spot them even though I'm not very good yet." — Alicia Robinson, EHS junior

I am blessed to work with such enthusiastic and interested young adults. Audubon-sponsored activities help me teach environmental awareness to students and develop an interest in birdwatching, which will hopefully turn them into lifelong birders.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Audubon Birding Trips

Bring binoculars, bird field guide, & dress for field conditions & weather. Coaching & instruction for all levels. For confirmation & more information, call trip leaders Paul Bauer (H# 921-3972) or Jim Malone (H# 536-1119).

Riverlands — *Saturday, January 10, 1998 at 9 am.* In St. Charles County near Alton, Il. Take Hwy 367 north of I-270, across Missouri River to right on last road before Mississippi River. Go east from gas station; turn right on first road to Teal Pond parking lot. See bald eagles, short-eared owls, raptors, waterfowl, & gulls.

Christmas Bird Counts

Pere Marquette Count — *Saturday, December 20.* Some areas will be preassigned. Others please meet at Marquette Lodge by 7:45 am. For more info. & to register, call Irene Mondthink at 618/885-5233 or Helen Wuestenfeld at 618/498-5335. The standard National Audubon participation fee of \$5 per person is for printing national results.

Busch Conservation Area Count — *Sunday, December 21,* in western St. Charles County. Meet in parking lot of headquarters area before 8 am. Be prepared for weather & bring lunch. Participation fee is \$5. To register, call Tom Parmeter at 314/921-6017.

Mingo National Wildlife Refuge Count — *Saturday, December 27,* in southeast Missouri. Meet at Puxico Restaurant by 6:30 am. If interested in helping, call Paul Bauer at 314/921-3972 or Bill Reeves at 573/756-4160 (home) or 573/760-8810 (work). \$5 participation fee required. See related article on this page.

Orchard Farm Count — *Saturday, January 3, 1998,* in central St. Charles

County. Randy Korotev, coordinator, will be out of town much of the Christmas season but expects to be back by January 1. To register, call Randy at 314/935-5637 & leave message. \$5 participation fee required.

Audubon-Related Activities

Joint WGNSS/Audubon Membership Meeting — *Friday, February 13, 1998,* at 8 pm. Held in large auditorium of St. Louis County Library on Lindbergh Blvd. Brad Jacobs, ornithologist & wildlife biologist with Missouri Conservation Department, will discuss "The Breeding Bird Atlas: What It Means for Birders in Missouri." See related article on page 1.

Special Events

Masters of the Sky: American Bald Eagle — *Saturday & Sunday, January 17 & 18, 1998,* at Clarksville; *January 31 & February 1, 1998,* at Alton. Sponsored by Corps of Engineers. For more info., call Julie Ziino, 899-2600 (Riverlands Office).

Eagle Days at Clarksville — *Saturday & Sunday, January 24 & 25, 1998,* 9 am to 4 pm. Program at AppleShed in Clarksville & eagle viewing along the Mississippi River. Sponsored by Missouri Conservation Department. See related article on page 5.

Urban Wildlife: Pleasure or Plague — *Wednesday, February 18, 1998,* 7:30 to 9 pm. Dr. Lonnie Hansen, Research Department of Missouri Conservation Department, is presenter. Part of SIGMA XI Science Seminar Series co-sponsored by St. Louis Zoo & Academy of Science St. Louis. Free seminar held in The Living World, north side of Zoo; free parking in north lot. For more info., call 768-5466 or 533-8083.

Mingo Christmas Bird Count—Are 100 Species Possible?

by Paul Bauer

In southeast Missouri, the most exciting year-round birding area is Mingo National Wildlife Refuge, which is flanked by Duck Creek Conservation Area and Lake Wappapello State Park. Bill Reeves of Farmington, the long-time coordinator for this Audubon Count, has set a goal to make this the first Missouri Christmas Count to break 100 bird species.

In 1995, 92 species were recorded, and in 1996 we had 97; last year a new state record was set with 99 species. The goal of 100 is easily possible if Bill can get the support of 25 to 30 observers to cover better the 3 areas mentioned above. We need the support of 6 or more birders from the St. Louis area. Bill has good support from the available southeast Missouri birders and usually has 4 or more birders from Columbia join in the fun.

This year the count date is Saturday, December 27. Teams will leave from the Puxico Restaurant about 6:30 am. If you are interested in helping, please call me at 314/921-3972.

Also you may call Bill Reeves directly at 573/756-4160 (home) or 573/760-8810 (work) to be included in this unique winter adventure.

Operation Clean Stream—Once Again a Success!

by Jerry Castillon

St. Louis Audubon once again participated in the annual Operation Clean Stream, held this year on August 23. This was the thirtieth year for the event, and we have been part of it for many of them. This event has expanded from the cleanup of the Meramec River to include the Bourbeuse, Big, Huzzah, and Courtois Streams.

We once again did the Meramec section from Times Beach (I-44 bridge) to Glencoe. We put in 6 canoes with 11 participants. The trash included about 15 tires, a partial boat hull, and many other ultra-lower class garage sale items. We all had a great time, and we're sure the future river users will be grateful.

Missouri Environmental Fund Update

by Laura Neuman

The Missouri Environmental Fund's third round of distributions, made in early December, was \$25,445. This brings the total shared among 20 member organizations to \$46,745. St. Louis Audubon received \$1,054 in this latest round of payments.

The Missouri Environmental Fund's web site is up and lists information and links for all 20 of its member organizations (which include St. Louis Audubon!). The web site also has a calendar listing a wonderful selection of events for outdoor enthusiasts, activists, and naturalists of almost all stripes. St. Louis Audubon activities are included with Sierra Club outings, prairie burns, Sustainable St. Louis meetings, and many more activities and volunteer opportunities happening throughout the region. Check it out at: www.moenvfund.org.

And we thank employees of the City of St. Louis Employees, area federal agencies, the State of Missouri, Pedro's Planet, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, CNA Insurance, *USA Today*, Aveda, and Microsoft for their generous support of the Missouri Environmental Fund.

The Missouri Environmental Fund is a federation of 20 non-profit organizations working to help maintain a healthier world for all of us. More details about the 20 organizations which benefit from the Fund are listed at the web site, or you may contact: P.O. Box 63349, St. Louis, MO 63163; e-mail: mef@moenvfund.org.



**Missouri
Environmental
Fund**

...includes the St. Louis Audubon Society among its members.

If your employer offers the payroll deduction option of the Missouri Environmental Fund, please give generously. Or call 314/771-6668 for more information about how you can help.

**20 groups working for you
and everyone else who
breathes air, drinks water,
eats food,
or lives on the land!**

The Conservation Corner

Birds in Winter

by Bill Groth

From November to March, birds, as well as all other animals, have an ever-increasing difficulty in obtaining the things they need to survive. During a long, cold winter night, a chickadee may lose 1 1/2 grams of body weight (about 1/7 of its total weight).

Birds are protected from the weather by their 2 layers of feathers. A layer of soft, fluffy downy feathers next to the skin traps air and heat. An outer layer of contour feathers acts as a windbreaker and protects the insulating layer from wind and weather just as our coats protect us from the weather. If the inner layer gets wet, it loses its insulating properties.

Birds also face into the wind. Their streamlined shape forces the wind to flow around them, keeping the feathers flat. If they faced away from the wind (as most people do when the wind is blowing hard), the feathers would become ruffled, and the trapped heat and air would be lost.

Where birds spend the winter is determined not by weather but by their food sources. Seed and berry eaters, as well as insect eaters that can find hibernating insects and their larvae, are the common birds that spend the winter with us. Many kinds of sparrows, juncos, woodpeckers, chickadees, and titmice can be seen during the winter. Most will come to backyard feeders. Often, flocks of robins spend the winter with us feeding upon berries.

Most of the birds of prey—hawks and owls—occupy the same territory and feed on the same animals both summer and winter. To reduce competition for the same foods, hawks hunt during the day and owls hunt mostly at night.

Many of our familiar songbirds migrate south. Some go only a few hundred miles (like wintering bluejays that might have come from Chicago), while others may travel to Argentina and

other South American countries. Before moving south, most birds change their colors and become dull, drab, and hard to identify. Before flying north in the spring or while they are moving north, these same birds molt again and sport their bright breeding colors.

One group of birds, the ptarmigans, change color in order to survive the winter. These brown, seed-eating birds of arctic regions would be easy prey against the white of the snow. In late fall, they change to white. In the spring, they change back to brown, to again become inconspicuous against their background.

Better Yard-Birding Tips: Winter Survival and Birdbath Heaters

by Paul Bauer

To survive, all animals, including birds, need 3 things: food, shelter, and water. This is true all year long but becomes critical for survival in winter.

Large numbers of people now feed birds when the weather turns cold; some folks enjoy the pleasure and feed birds all year long. Once you start feeding birds in winter, it is important that you continue until at least April, when new buds and insects are available for food. Skipping a day or so is fine if the weather is above freezing and the ground is not covered with snow or ice. This makes the birds search out and use natural food in your neighborhood. But if you are going to be away for many days or weeks, please arrange for a neighbor to refill the feeders.

Shelter for birds in winter is provided in many ways, but any dense evergreens or junipers serve very well. Also dense bushes or wood piles help. You can create a dense brush pile in the corner of the yard, near a wooden fence, or in other areas near your home that are sheltered from the north and west winds. This shelter from the wind will provide life-saving warmth if temperatures drop below zero. The dense feathers covering

birds can provide excellent insulation to retain body warmth, unless strong winds ruffle those feathers to destroy the insulation benefits. Remember that good shelter helps birds survive during those most severe winter wind storms.

Providing water to birds in winter is a tougher problem, yet equally important. All animals need water to help metabolize their food, to release the energy needed for survival. Natural water is not available during much of the winter when temperatures are often well below freezing. One simple approach is to refill your birdbath several times a day with a jug of tap water from the house. During long cold spells this can become a nuisance—having to put on coats, hats, and gloves every few hours and coping with a large buildup of ice on the bird-bath. Also, this method does not work at all if you must be away from home during the day.

In recent years several styles of birdbath heaters have appeared in the wild bird-type stores. These can solve all of your winter problems in providing continuous open water for birds. The heaters come in at least 3 wattages (150, 200, and 250); most have a thermostat that turns the heater off when the water is above 40° F, and this saves power. My own experience for the normal concrete birdbath and St. Louis winters is that a heater with 250 watts is necessary; this will still provide open water for conditions when air temperatures go below -10° F.

The heater style that I like best has a plastic tab protruding from the side so that a square rock or a third of a brick can be used to hold the heater in place. Be sure to use a grounded extension cord to a grounded outlet. I tie a short rope around the birdbath pedestal where the heater plug and extension cord come together and use electrical tape to waterproof the joint where the plug and extension cord join.

Also it is important to keep the birdbath filled daily so that the heater stays submerged in water. On nice winter days not only will every bird come to drink, but many will also take baths!



Come to Eagle Days

by Mary Smith

Missouri's winter eagle watching is spectacular, and Eagle Days in Clarksville on January 24 and 25, 1998, is a great opportunity to view our national symbol in the wild.

The events include both indoor programs and outdoor eagle viewing. Live eagle presentations, exhibits, videos, and activities are all a part of each program. Eagle presentations are repeated hourly. Guides from the Missouri Department of Conservation will be available all day to help you view bald eagles through spotting telescopes.

Be sure to dress warmly! And you may want to bring your camera and binoculars.

Programs and eagle viewing will be conducted from 9 am to 4 pm on both Saturday and Sunday, January 24 and 25. Clarksville is located approximately 50 miles north of O'Fallon on Highway 79. From St. Louis, take Highway 70 west to Highway 79 north; follow the signs once in town.

Books for Auduboners

by Jim Holsen

In recent months the Missouri Department of Conservation has published 3 books that should be of interest to Audubon members:

Missouri Breeding Bird Atlas: 1986-1992 by Brad Jacobs and James D. Wilson — Compiled with the help of over 400 volunteers, the Atlas supplements similar studies from other states. This is a good book to thumb through, a reminder of the diversity in Missouri's birds.

Shrubs and Woody Vines of Missouri by Don Kurz, with illustrations by Paul Nelson — Intended for use by amateur and professional botanists, this book provides detailed descriptions and pen-and-ink illustrations of 170 species of native and non-native plants.

Enjoying Missouri's Birds by James P. Jackson and James D. Wilson — This free booklet has useful information on bird identification and habitat, with a 15-page section of bar charts showing the periods of the year when each of 291 species is likely to be seen and the relative

abundance of each species.

Please phone the Powder Valley Nature Center at 301-1500 for availability and cost of any of these publications.

Fall Birding . . . from page 1

Another recent birding trip was on November 22 at the Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area. We had a fine turnout for this walk as well, with good coverage by Audubon and WGNSS members. The variety of duck species this day was nearly as good as it gets in this area, with species highlights including several redheads, buffleheads, ruddy ducks, greater scaup, a black scoter and a surf scoter. The group saw hovering American kestrels along the road at Riverlands, as well as bald eagles, northern harriers, and red-tailed hawks. Ten trumpeter swans (including 2 which were very young) landed in Ellis Bay as we were leaving, allowing us to stop and study them for several minutes. Following the regular walk, several of us went to a private home in Wood River where an adult male rufous hummingbird had been appearing for a couple of weeks. The homeowners graciously allowed us into their backyard to see this beautiful little bird. This was a good life bird day for many attendees.

On December 7 we returned to Horseshoe Lake in southern Illinois. This time of year, Horseshoe Lake is typically good for waterfowl (often containing unusual grebes) and gulls, but the site can be good for raptor activity as well.

On January 10 at 9 am, we will return to Riverlands for our first walk of the new year. By January, Riverlands is usually packed with bald eagles, short-eared owls, raptors (possibly rough-legged hawks), waterfowl, and gulls. If the weather is especially cold, we may see some of the more unusual gulls (like glaucous or Iceland) or perhaps a jaeger out on the ice.

As you can see, we are having a great deal of fun and success finding birds this fall, so come out and join us. The scheduled trips are typically led by 2 or more experienced birders who are ready and willing to help you find all the birds identified by the group. As always, our aim is to allow each participant a chance to see each bird, so we may move at a bit slower pace than some are used to.

AUDUBON ADVENTURES



The Education Corner

2nd Annual Environmental Education Conference

by Dianne Johnson

This conference, held October 24 through 26 at Tan-Tar-A Resort in Osage Beach, was sponsored by the Missouri Education Association and the Missouri Department of Conservation's Office of Environmental Education.

The conference committee hoped the theme of "Hands on the Environment: Building a Sense of Place" encompassed both the need to dream big dreams and the need to discover new practical approaches to our everyday tasks.

Meeting people, sharing ideas, and re-energizing were easy activities because everyone there was enthusiastic to the degree of being passionate about environmental education. The workshops, sessions, and exhibits were informative and provided relevant, useful materials for the classroom teacher. The song- and humor-laden presentations from keynote speakers Douglas Wood, Alan Thein Durning, and Stan Gruszynski contained powerful and thought-provoking messages.

Teachers have a tremendous task ahead of them to teach students environmental quality. Students need to be empowered with the knowledge of environmental problems so they can investigate issues and make positive changes in their community.

Field Office Proposal Moves on to NAS

by Mary Dueren

The state committee has completed the proposal on the field office for the state of Missouri. Input came from all corners of the state. The final product has been sent to National Audubon Society for evaluation and consideration.

Some highlights of the proposal include the title of the office, Audubon

Missouri; the proposed evolution of the Missouri Audubon Council into the board of directors of the office; and a budget of \$200,000 for the first year of operation.

Funds for operations will come from a NAS challenge grant and membership donations from large and small contributors. The Missouri Conservation Department has already given a grant to the office and may continue to do so in the future. The proposed staff will include a director, a development director/fund raiser, clerical staff, and volunteers.

A lot of hard work went into this proposal. Besides me, the other contributors include Brad Jacobs, Columbia; Anita Randolph, Jefferson City; Jan Burch and Ed McCollough, Kansas City; Karen Uhlenhuth, Missouri Audubon Council president/Kansas City; and Mike Doyen, Rolla; and all chapters and members who sent us their thoughts, ideas, and concerns.

By no means is the process over. The committee will remain intact until the proposal has been accepted and a director and/or development director has been hired.

Anyone wishing to see the case statement and proposal may contact me at 576-1473 (evenings).

More Web Sites of Interest to Auduboners

by Jim Malone

In the last *Tale Feathers*, I showed you some Internet sites that are useful or interesting for birders. This time, the focus will be shifted more to environmental and conservation resources. The Internet is a great place to find a wide range of information about the effects humans have on the planet and other information which might just help us preserve the birds and other species for those who follow us.

There are lots of good educational sites which relate in some way to conservation or bird habitat issues. Here is a brief list to get you started:

<http://www.nceet.snre.umich.edu/index.html> — environmental education on the Internet
<http://www.ciesin.org/training/CE.html> — Classroom Earth Home Page
<http://www.fws.gov/~r9mbmo/homepg.html> — migratory birds and waterfowl
<http://www.econet.aoc.org> — EcoNet

Air and water quality and conservation issues are topics in the following addresses:

<http://www.epa.gov> — Environmental Protection Agency
<http://www.hydroweb.com> — International Association for Environmental Hydrology
<http://www.nwi.fws.gov> — National Wetlands Inventory, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
<http://www.inform.umd.edu> — Water Quality Information Center
<http://www.awma.org> — Air and Waste Management Association
<http://www.wef.org> — Water Environment Federation

Organizations committed to environmental/conservation issues follow:

<http://www.webdirectory.com> — Environmental Organization WebDirectory
<http://www.audubon.org> — National Audubon Society
<http://www.fws.gov> — U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Home Page
<http://www.epa.gov/enviro/> — ENVIROFACTS, a complete database of information from EPA
<http://www.state.mo.us/dnr/deq/homedeq.htm> — Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Div. Env. Quality Home Page

Another source of continuously updated information on the Internet is listservers. A listserver is a computer which receives messages from individuals over the Internet and then copies and distributes each message to a list of subscribers. Listservers perform these tasks automatically, with little or no time lag, and the subscriptions cost nothing. The following listservers cover environmental issues. To subscribe, send an e-mail message to the address shown below. The listserver will automatically add your e-mail address to the list of subscribers.

listserv@cedar.univie.ac.at — Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
listserv@hearn.nic.surfnet.nl — Environmental Information Distribution List
listserv@pan.cedar.univie.ac.at — INFOTERRA

Chautauqua NWR Trip Draws Hearty Group

by Jim Malone

Near the end of October, 27 of us traveled to central Illinois for a weekend at the Chautauqua National Wildlife Refuge (part of the Illinois River National Wildlife Refuge) and other sites along the Illinois River. The weather could have been a bit more cooperative, but this enthusiastic group of hearty souls was not about to let a little cold or wind or rain (did I mention snow?) stop them from having a great weekend!

On Saturday morning, we went to Sand Ridge State Forest near Chautauqua to see if we could find any irrupting winter finches. Although we did not find the pine siskins we had hoped for, we got great views of a number of wintering sparrow species, red- and white-breasted nuthatches, woodpeckers, and finches. The highlight of this location had to be the lengthy spotting scope views we had of a group of 10 red crossbills (a life bird for many on the trip).

Next, we moved to a cross-dike which separates the 2 lakes at Chautauqua. On the road leading to the dike, some were lucky enough to see a small group of Brewer's blackbirds, a hairy woodpecker, and chattering groups of American goldfinches. The shallow water south of the dike contained thousands of ducks, geese, raptors, and some late shorebirds. To the north, diving ducks, more shorebirds, gulls, and waders made up most of the bird life. One little spit of sand on the north side held ring-billed gulls, herring gulls, American white pelicans, and a lone Franklin's gull. Nearby, a double-crested cormorant and horned grebes took frequent dives for food while American

avocets, greater yellowlegs, lesser yellowlegs, and pectoral sandpipers probed the sand and shallow waters. A small shorebird was also seen flying in a zigzag pattern common to phalaropes, but it was too far away to positively identify. The lake south of the cross-dike was covered with dabbling ducks of all kinds. There were also huge groups of Canada geese, snow geese, and even a few greater white-fronted geese. Immature bald eagles cruising over the shallow waters of this lake often caused the air to fill with huge swirling masses of ducks and geese, but usually the eagles kept on flying, looking for easier prey.

After lunch, we moved on to the Chautauqua headquarters where we ventured out along the 1/2-mile nature trail. Along this trail, there are 3 openings in the heavy woods where the trail meets the edge of the lake. At each of these locations, wooden platforms with built-in benches afford a panoramic view of the lower lake. From this vantage point, we were able to identify blue- and green-winged teal, American black ducks, northern pintails, American widgeons, and common snipe (moving stealthily through the grass at the edge of the lake). Even though it was rather cold this Saturday, there were still some late tree swallows, a barn swallow, and even a purple martin flying over the water looking for a bit of food on the wing. At 1 of the observation sites, a tundra swan was present at the edge of the lake, within easy spotting scope (and binocular) range. The last observation area along this trail held more of the same great numbers and variety of

waterfowl—and something we hadn't expected. We watched a life-and-death struggle unfold immediately in front of us when an injured American coot was repeatedly attacked by a third-year bald eagle. Although the coot tried to hide in the nearby weeds, there simply wasn't anywhere to hide from the hungry eagle who finally carried off the coot.

On the way back down the Illinois River Sunday morning, we stopped briefly at Anderson Lake. Although the wind was getting colder by the minute and there were only 3 birds visible on the water, the stop was worth it. One bird diving in the lake was a common loon, and flying above that was a Bonaparte's gull. Farther down the river, we entered the Meredosia portion of the Illinois River National Wildlife Refuge. As the wind remained steady, the rain began turning to snow, but not before we were able to find a nice pocket of various birds along the shallow bank of Lake Meredosia. Once again, we saw a rather late American avocet, a nice group of long-billed dowitchers, and another good assortment of dabbling ducks including wood ducks.

In all, the weekend tally for bird species was 80, and everyone seemed to have a great time. Anyone wishing to get a copy of the accumulated bird list for this trip or the spring 1997 Mingo trip, please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

Jim Malone
15424 Elk Ridge Lane
Chesterfield, MO 63017

ST. LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Check the membership category desired:

☐ New	☐ Renewal
☐ Introductory/\$20	☐ Individual/\$35
☐ Sustaining/\$50	☐ Family/\$40
☐ Sr. Citizen Family/\$23	☐ Supporting/\$100
	☐ Sr. Citizen/\$21

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Send application to:

Mrs. Katherine Chambers, Membership Chairperson
St. Louis Audubon Society 7XCH8
7024 Forsyth
St. Louis, MO 63105

Make membership checks payable to:

National Audubon Society

If you wish to make a donation to the local chapter, please write a separate check to:

St. Louis Audubon Society

Officers 1997-98

Jim Holsen	President	822-0410
Bill Groth, Jr.	VP-Education	
Arthur Montgomery	VP-Conservation	843-7440
Mary Lou Miller	VP-Finance	822-1215
Mary Dueren	Treasurer	389-3969
	Secretary	576-1473

Board of Directors

Mike Arduser		968-8479
Christy Beckmann	MO Environmental Fund	822-2428
Bill Brandhorst	Wildlife Mountings	965-7269
Lynne Breakstone		726-4772
Jerry Castillon	Operation Clean Stream	391-7586
Dallas Cox		878-1080
Tom Day	Annual Dinner/Meeting	962-4064
Susanne Greenlee	Butterfly Count Coordinator	727-6044
Dianne Johnson		458-4369
Sara Lenoe		351-4565
Jim Malone	Birding	536-1119
Edward Ortleb		351-0966
Dale Ponce		394-6011
Rex Schmidt		861-2173
Sue Smith	Programs	256-7986
John Solodar		862-5294
Dannia Stevens		618/451-1255
Julie Wells	Awards & Scholarships	962-2093

Other Chairpeople/Coordinators

Paul Bauer	Birding	921-3972
Katherine Chambers	Membership	863-9346
	Newsletter Mailing	
Sue Jones	Bird Seed Sale Committee	721-0819
LaVerne Koyn	Message Center Phone Line	878-9125
Dorothy Mill	Community Club Awards	966-6163
Jerry Miller	Investment Committee	389-3969
Janice Patton	Print Library	921-4875
Karen Turner	Resource Center Network Rep.	771-6814
	SLEEN Representative	
Dave Tylka	Strategic Planning Committee	984-7712

Our Phone Number

To contact the St. Louis Audubon Society, please call (314) 822-6595.

THANK YOU

For Donations to the St. Louis Audubon Society:

WILLIAM & HELEN BOEMLER,
in memory of Guy Deeks

Audubon Office Acquires Needed File Cabinet

by Jim Holsen

Rex Gary Schmidt has generously donated a 4-drawer filing cabinet to the St. Louis Audubon Society. In November, Rex and his wife, Frances, moved to Farmington, where they have a daughter. Rex has served St. Louis Audubon as a board member.

Rex's gift will help us to collect our records in 1 place where they will be available to future officers and members. Unfortunately at the present time, many of our Society's important papers are scattered about in the homes of past officers and board members. Anyone with records to contribute to Audubon's files should contact me at 822-0410 or any board member in the list to the left. Thank you.

Newsletter Information

The St. Louis Audubon Society's *Tale Feathers* is printed bimonthly on recycled paper with soy ink and produced by Dolde Printing Co., 1350 Lonedell Road, Arnold, MO 63010.

Please send any article submissions for the next edition by **January 23, 1998** to Karen Tylka, 3155 Frisco Hill Road, Imperial, MO 63052 (H# 942-3142).



MRS MARTIN W DIETRICH
9843 MEADOW FERN
ST LOUIS MO 63126-2417
NOV 98

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ST. LOUIS, MO
PERMIT NO. 5128

Member Organization



ST. LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY
3927 Lucas & Hunt Road
St. Louis, Missouri 63121